

BELLINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Report of the Medical Officer.

62nd Annual Report.

1941.

As instructed in Ministry of Health Circular 2604 this report is restricted to matters affecting Public Health, Maternity and Child Welfare and also infectious disease.

Infectious Diseases.

The year opened as usual with Influenza which was however mild and mostly of the Gastrointestinal type. There were also one or two cases of Pneumonia.

In February the outbreak of Influenza assumed widespread proportions many of a Bronchial type. Four scattered cases of Measles occurred. Whooping cough commenced at Otterburn, and six cases have been notified.

In March Influenza was still spreading and changing almost entirely to a bronchial type with two or three cases of Bronchopneumonia. At Otterburn Whooping cough spread rapidly and 13 more children were involved. Doubtless there were many more which never came to light. Most of these cases were children under school age.

The month of April saw the end of the epidemic of Influenza but Whooping Cough continued to spread at Otterburn and a small outbreak of Measles occurred.

In May Whooping cough died out but Measles in a mild form was prevalent in most parts of the area. One case of Scarlet Fever occurred and was removed to hospital.

June saw an improvement as Measles almost disappeared but two cases of diphtheria were reported. A few suspected cases of Mumps occurred at Otterburn but this died out very quickly.

In July two suspected cases of diphtheria occurred and a slight outbreak of Measles in one family. One case of Pneumonia also was notified.

In August Whooping cough reappeared four cases being discovered and two further cases of diphtheria in the same house as those previously mentioned.

In September mild Whooping cough broke out in the Upper North Tyne, nine being notified. Three of the four diphtheria patients still had positive swabs and were ultimately sent to hospital for tonsillectomy.

In October epidemic of Catarrhal Jaundice reappeared and spread rapidly. Two cases of Mumps were also notified.

November shewed an improvement as only one case of Scarlet Fever was notified.

In December epidemic of Catarrhal Jaundice was very prevalent in all parts of the area. One case of Mumps also was notified.

This year again shewed a heavy incidence of infectious disease. One feature was the excellent results following the use of Vaccine in the Whooping Cough epidemic. It appeared not only to cut the disease short but helped to prevent the spread of infection.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

In the latter part of the year over 600 school and under school age



children were given 2 injections of A.P.T. This represents a large percentage of the children in the district.

Venereal Disease.

Venereal disease is extremely rare in this area, not more than a dozen cases having come to light in the past 20 years.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

A Clinic under Dr. Glen Davison has been opened in Bellingham and is much appreciated by the Mothers of young children in the district. The two health nurses still continue their work of child welfare.

Maternity work is still in the hands of six district nurses and is carried out very efficiently.

Medical Officer of Health.

